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Socialist Labor Party

Report of the Socialist Labor Party of the U.S. ...

[New York]

[1907]

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Box 808 Socialist labor party.

Report of the Socialist labor party of the United States of America to the International congress held in Stuttgart, August 18–25, 1907. [New York, 1907]

21, [1] p. 23½ cm.

1. International socialist congress. 7th, Stuttgart, 1907.

12-15670

Library of Congress HX13.A5 1907 a ONLY ED.

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TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 11:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 9-29-97 INITIALS: AP

TRACKING # : 27866

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REPORT

OF THE

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Of the United States of America

TO THE

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS held in

STUTTGART

AUG. 18-25, 1907

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To the International Socialist Congress of Stuttgart, August 18, 1907.

GREETING:—

This year's report of the Socialist Labor Party to the comrades of the world, assembled in International Congress, is, in the very nature of things, so close a continuation of the report presented to the Congress of Amsterdam, held three years ago, that the latter report would have had to be more than referred to. It would have had to be quoted from extensively. Owing, however, to the accident that caused the said report to the Amsterdam Congress to be omitted from the volume published by the International Bureau containing the reports presented by other nationalities, and having, moreover, received from the International Bureau the promise that the omission would be rectified by the speedy publication of the said report, the Socialist Labor Party of America deems it best to introduce its this year's report with the citation in full, at this place, of its report for 1904.

There is a further reason that induces the Socialist Labor Party to reproduce at this place its Amsterdam report. Too busy at home, and holding moreover, that the battles of the American Movement will have to be fought out in America, and not in the columns of papers abroad, the Socialist Labor Party has abstained from entering into competition with the unfriendly writers to European papers from this country. The consequence has been a generally inhospitable atmosphere in the European Socialist press, inhospitable towards the Socialist Labor Party, with the further consequence that the European comrades have been left in substantial darkness upon the great issue that is being fought out here in America. Whether the Socialist Labor Party is right or wrong, the facts in the strug-

gle can not fail to be of interest to the students of the International Movement. Considering it, accordingly, of importance to the fulness of information for the International Movement that at least a sketch, but authoritative and furnished by the S. L. P. itself, be available, the same is hereby presented with the report to Amsterdam as its basis. That report was as follows:

To the International Socialist Congress of Amsterdam, August 14, 1904:

Greeting.—

To judge by the frequent expressions of astonishment from European sources at what they call the backwardness of the Socialist Movement in America—a backwardness which they judge wholly by votes—the conclusion is warranted that essential features of America are not given the weight that they are entitled to, or are wholly overlooked. What these features are the country's census furnishes the material to work upon, and, again, the immortal genius of Karl Marx supplies us with the principle to guide us in the selection of the requisite categories of fact and with the norm by which to gauge and analyse the material thus gathered.

In the monograph "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," the proletarian insurrection of 1848 is used as a text for the following generalization:

"Nations enjoying an older civilization, having developed class distinctions, modern conditions of production, an intellectual consciousness, wherein all traditions of old have been dissolved through the work of centuries, with such countries the republic means only the POLITICAL REVOLUTIONARY FORM OF BOURGEOIS SOCIETY not its CONSERVATIVE FORM OF EXISTENCE," and this grave fact is brought out forcibly by contrasting such a country, France, with "the United States of America, where true enough, the classes already exist, but have not yet acquired permanent character, are in constant flux and reflux, constantly changing their elements and yielding them up to one another; where the modern means of production, instead of coinciding with a stagnant population, rather compensate for the relative scarcity of heads and hands; and finally, where the feverishly youthful life of material production, which has to appropriate a new world to itself has so far left neither time nor opportunity to abolish the illusions of old."

This was written in 1852. The giant strides since made by America, her fabulous production of wealth, rise in manufacture and agriculture that practically place her at the head of all other nations in this respect, in short, the stupendous stage of capitalist development that the country has reached, would seem to remove the contrast. It does not. These changes are not enough to draw conclusions as to the stage of Socialism that may be expected. The above passages from Marx explain why, and they indicate what other factors need consideration before a bourgeois republic has left behind

it its "conservative form of existence" and entered upon that "political revolutionary" stage of its life, without which a Socialist Movement can not be expected to gain its steerage way. These factors—the "permanent character" and, therefore, "intellectual consciousness" of the classes, due to the "traditions of old having been dissolved through the work of centuries"; the maturity of life of material production which, no longer having "to appropriate a new world to itself," has the requisite time and opportunity "to abolish the illusions of old," etc.,—also require consideration and their status ascertained. They are essential to a final and intelligent conclusion. A rough and rapid sketch of the facts that throw light upon these factors will clarify the situation.

Since the census facts of 1850 on which Marx drew, the continental area of the United States has been widened by not less than 1,057,441 square miles, or not far from doubled what it was in 1850; as a result, the center of population, which in 1850 was at 81 deg. 19 min. longitude, or 23 miles southwest of Parkersburg in the present State of West Virginia, has since shifted westward fully four degrees of longitude, and now lies six miles west of Columbus, Ind.; and as a further or accompanying result, the center of manufacture which in 1850 lay at 77 deg. 25 min. longitude, near Mifflintown, Pa., has since steadily traveled westward until it has to-day reached 82 deg. 12 min. longitude near Mansfield in central Ohio. Nor has the westward move stopped. One more fact of importance along this line of inquiry will suffice to aid in forming an idea of the meteorologic lay of social conditions, so to speak. While as late as 1880, thirty years after Marx' monograph, the census returned 55,404 water wheels and no electric motors, ten years later the water wheels had fallen to 39,008 and the electric motors, starting then, have since risen to 16,923 and steam power in proportion. The situation, brought about by these facts, may be summed up by the light of the quaint report that played-out locomotive engines, which once did service on our city elevated roads and have been discarded for electric motors, now are drawing trains on the railroads in China! Machinery and methods of production, discarded in more advanced centers, are constantly reappearing in less advanced localities, carried thither by the flux of our population westward. It goes without saying, that under such conditions, not only is the population still not "stagnant", not only is there still a "constant flux and reflux", not only is there still a "constant changing" or "yielding up to one another" by the classes, but that still the odd phenomenon is visible in America of families with members in all the classes, from the upper and plutocratic class, down through the various gradations of the middle class, down to the "house-and-lot"-owning wage slave in the shop, and even further down to the wholly propertiless proletariat. It goes without saying that, under such conditions, there still is in America that "feverishly youthful life of material production" and that, accordingly, "the illusions of old" have not yet had time to be wiped out. Nor has the immigration from Europe aided matters. On the whole it has fallen in with the stream as it flows. It is, for instance, a conservative estimate that if one-half the Europeans, now located in Greater New York and who in their old homes pronounced

themselves Socialists, remained so here, the Socialist organization in the city alone would have not less than 25,000 enrolled members. Yet there is no such membership or anything like it. The natives' old illusions regarding material prospects draw the bulk of the immigrants into its vortex .

It goes without saying that such conditions point to the existing bourgeois republic of America as still traveling in the orbit that Marx observed it in during 1852,—at the CONSERVATIVE and not yet the POLITICAL REVOLUTIONARY form of its existence. In short, these conditions explain why, as yet, despite the stupendous development of capitalism in the country, a numerically powerful Socialist Labor Party, such as such a capitalist development might at first blush mislead the casual observer into expecting, does not and can not yet exist. Incidentally, these conditions throw valuable light upon the nature of the "revolutionary movements" that periodically spring up, whose discordant waves angrily beat against the Socialist Labor Party, and whose mouthpieces make so much noise—abroad. It explains, for instance, the flaring up of the Single Tax Movement with its 300,000 votes in the eighties; it explains the Populist Movement of a decade later, in the nineties, with its 1,200,000 votes; it explains the latest of the serial in direct line of succession, the so-called Socialist or Social Democratic Movement of this decade with its 250,000 votes. The first two have already passed away, and the latter—after adopting a "revisionist" platform and a trades union resolution, which its own delegate to this international congress, Mr. Ernst Untermann, admits in the "Neue Zeit" of last May 28th, to be "a covert endorsement of the American Federation of Labor, which meant nothing else than a thrust at the American Labor Union, which had seceded from the former organization in order to EMANCIPATE ITSELF FROM THE DOMINATION OF THE REACTIONISTS AND HANDMAIDS OF THE CAPITALISTS," and which, with stronger emphasis, the "American Labor Union Journal" of May 26th, a hitherto upholder of the said so-called Socialist party, deliberately brands as "COMMITTING THE PARTY TO SCAB-HERDING"—may be said to have fairly entered upon the period of its dissolution. Each of these movements successively set itself up as the AMERICAN Socialist Movement and waged violent war against the Socialist Labor Party during their flickering existence, and then—dragged down and throttled by the umbilical cord of the illusions that are born from the conditions in the land sketched above—after living their noisy day, regularly and fatedly entered upon their period of dissolution.—never, however, without regularly leaving behind a more or less solid sediment for the Socialist Labor Party, whom, on the other hand, and as regularly, during the period of their rise and growth, they cleansed, by drawing to themselves, of unfit and unripe elements that, in the intervals, had gravitated to the S. L. P. Thus, since its incipient vote of 13,337 in 1890, the first year of its real existence, the vote record of the Socialist Labor Party, during the following presidential or national campaign years, presents the following table:

In 1892.....21,157 votes;
In 1896.....36,564 votes;
In 1900.....34,191 votes.

In 1902, not a presidential year but the nearest so far approach thereto through State elections, the vote again rose to 53,763.

If proper weight is given to the social conditions sketched above, another circumstance of much weight will transpire—the circumstance that in America, the small vote of a bona fide Socialist organization is no criterion of its strength, of the work it does, or of the Socialist sentiment in the land, in short, it is no criterion of the proximity or distance of the crowning event, of the dethronement of the capitalist class. In America capitalist morality has invaded the hustings. The chicanery practised by the ruling class in the factory, the retail shop or their legalized gambling dens, known as "stock exchanges", has been introduced by them into the electoral field, and there sways supreme. The laws they have enacted to keep their respective parties from cheating each other would furnish a living Montesquieu with a matchless theme for a matchless chapter on "The Spirit of Legislation." Of course, the spirit of these anti-fraud election laws directly warrants the contending parties of the ruling class to ignore, aye, to violate them against a bona fide party of Socialism. The unseating of a Congressman for fraudulent election practices is not unknown, but it is never practiced except by the majority against the minority party when the former needs the seat. Such a thing as the unseating of a capitalist class member of the Reichstag for fraud and ordering a new election at which a Socialist candidate is elected, as has happened in Germany; or the unseating, for similar reasons, of a Count Boni de Castellane, the sharer, through marriage, of our American capitalist Jay Gould's millions, as recently happened in France, strikes our American capitalists, and all others who are swayed by their modes of thought, as incomprehensibly silly. They understand it as little as Western people understand the sentiment of a Japanese soldier to rather die than surrender to the Russians. What that means to a vote that really threatens the ruling class is obvious. Obvious, consequently, is the fact that the day of the Socialist vote is not yet. The capitalist corruptionists thwart to-day the fiat of the ballot. But monkeying with the thermometer never yet affected the temperature.

Accordingly, the criterion of the seaworthiness of a Socialist Movement in the waters of American conditions is the character of its agitational, educational, and organizing propaganda; the quantity and quality of the literature it soaks the country with; the strictness of its self-imposed discipline; the firmness and intrepidity of its posture. The Socialist Labor Party has for now four years published the only Socialist daily paper in the English-speaking world—the Daily People; for the last thirteen years it has published a weekly—the Weekly People. These, besides the vast literature that it publishes through its press—much of it original, much of it translations of the best that the revolutionary movements in other languages have produced —are standard in the English-speaking movement. They breathe the uncompromising spirit that American conditions render imperative to a Socialist Movement unless it is ready either to render itself ridiculous, or to betray the working class with revisionist flap-doodleism. Accordingly, the Socialist Labor Party never withholds a blow at Wrong lest it make an enemy, or lose a friend. It yields to no lures,

If, in other countries conditions allow, or, perchance, require a different course, not so here: the Socialist Labor Party of America hews close to the line. In its war upon the capitalist class, the Party allows not itself to be used as a prop for that class: whether the capitalist formation appear in the shape of a Trust, or in that of a revamped bourgeois guild, sailing under the false colors of "Trades Unionism," the Party ruthlessly exposes both—IT EXPOSES BOTH—even though workingmen may hold stock in the former, the Trust, as the so-called Trades Union of the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers do in Carnegie's United States Steel Corporation; and even if it be workingmen who constitute the rank and file of the revamped bourgeois guilds sailing under the flag of Trades Unionism, and thereby keep the working class divided by the Chinese Walls of prohibitive high dues and initiation fees, or other guild practices, as many so-called Trades Unions do. The unflinching attitude imposed upon a bona fide party of Socialism in America is incomprehensible to the successive waves of alleged revolutionary movements and American reformers generally, who with the tenacity of a disease turn up and turn down on the country's political stage. Being incomprehensible to them, the Socialist Labor Party is the object of their violent animosity, and is successively pronounced dead by them,—on paper. The Socialists of Europe will understand this phenomenon when they are told that the identical epithets which the Millerand-Jaures revisionists of France bestow upon the Parti Socialiste de France (U. S. R.)—"ill-natured," "narrow," "intolerant," etc., etc.,—have been and continue to be bestowed with monotonous regularity by these American "revisionists" upon the Socialist Labor Party.

It is this "ill-nature," "narrowness," "intolerance," etc., that is urging on the day of the dethronement of the American capitalist class. At the time of the McKinley assassination in 1901, for instance, when the capitalist class tried to profit by the event to root up all impulse towards its overthrow, all voices with one exception, that had at all seemed in opposition to class rule, were silenced, they dared not utter themselves. That solitary exception was the voice of the Socialist Labor Party. Scores of its speakers were arrested and otherwise persecuted, yet they held their ground and triumphed over the attempt to throttle the voice of the proletariat. Capitalist development in America is now rapidly overtaking and overcoming the obstacles that Marx enumerated for the conservative form of the American bourgeois republic to enter upon its political revolutionary form. Things are ripening rapidly. When the day of the vote shall have arrived for the Socialist Movement of America that vote will be counted—or the men whom the Socialist Labor Party is gathering and drilling WILL KNOW THE REASON WHY. The backwardness of the Socialist Movement in America is on the surface only. Whatever the thermometer of the Socialist vote, monkeyed with by capitalist corruption, may register, the temperature is rising.

The S. L. P. platform demands—and the Party's every act is in strict accordance with the demands—the unconditional surrender of the capitalist class; and the Party is guided exclusively by the Polar Star of the principle that the emancipation of the working

class must be the work of the working class itself. The Party takes nothing less because it knows that anything less means Revisionism.

[APPENDIX.]

The passage in the article of the "American Labor Union Journal", quoted in the above report, is worth reproducing in full in that it illuminates a goodly portion of the umbilical cord that fatedly drags down and throttles all these alleged "American Socialist" movements which periodically rise against the Socialist Labor Party. This is the passage:

"The men who spoke in support of the resolution (the substitute) from Ben. Hanford to Hilquit did not attempt to reply to these arguments. They kept up a constant reiteration of the charges that those who opposed the resolution are opposed to trades unions, which was a thousand miles from the truth, the facts being that the opposition was not to trade union indorsement, but to the kind of trades unionism it was sought to indorse. AS IT STANDS THE SOCIALIST PARTY IS COMMITTED TO SCAB HERDING, organization of dual unions, misleading of the working class, the expenditure of union funds to defeat Socialist candidates, the segregation of the working class into craft units which are powerless to accomplish anything AND IT HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO THIS BECAUSE A FEW AMBITIOUS EASTERN COMRADES WERE ANXIOUS TO MAKE THINGS PLEASANT FOR THEMSELVES IN THE PURE AND SIMPLE UNIONS."

And in a subsequent article, June 2, the same paper explains in what consists the "making of things pleasant for themselves" by the Eastern members, the dominant element, in its party. It says:

"The rank and file have no axes to grind. They have no inducement TO CRAWL LIKE WHIPPED CURS AT THE FOOT OF A NATIONAL LABOR FAKIR. The rank and file are not SEEKING PREFERMENT in pure and simple bodies. They are not SEEKING A DELEGATION ABROAD, nor are they after AN ORGANIZER'S COMMISSION in fakirdom. They have no PAPERS TO PEDDLE in fakirdom"—in short, the umbilical cord of the private and guild interests of that eastern and dominant element of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, party is of a nature that must inevitably betray the working class, and, consequently, throttle the said party as its lineal ancestors did.

New York, July 15, 1904.

DANIEL DE LEON,
Delegate of the Socialist Labor Party of the United States of America.

By order of the National Executive Committee, S. L. P.
HENRY KUHN,
National Secretary.

It is apparent from the above that the field of the American Labor Movement is cut up into warring militant factions. Such a sight suggests the idea of chaos and of a waste of

energy. The election returns seem to lend confirmation to the idea of wasted energy. A few instances would seem striking illustrations. They are taken mainly from the State of New York, where the feud between the two parties of Socialism started.

At the gubernatorial election in the State of New York in 1898, just before the Socialist Labor Party split and the Socialist party was started in this State, the Party vote was 22,301; last year, that is, eight years later and seven years after the split, the poll of the two parties together amounted to only 26,375, or barely 4,000 more. But small as this increase is, it is misleading. The real trend of affairs is revealed by comparing the gubernatorial poll of the two parties for 1904, and for last year. In 1904 the two polled together 45,233 votes; in 1906, 26,375 votes. A loss of 18,858, towards which loss the Socialist Labor Party contributed 4,624, and the Socialist party 14,506 votes.

In 1896, before the split, the Socialist Labor Party polled for Congress in the Ninth Congress District (a New York City district), 4,371 votes; last year, that is ten years later and seven after the the split, and the Socialist Labor Party having left the field free to the Socialist party candidate for Congress in that district, he polled only 3,586 votes—785 less. The total electorate of that particular district had, it is true, declined since 1896, nevertheless ten years agitation, extraordinary opportunities, but seven years conflict produced an absolute loss of 785 votes.

A third instance may be furnished by one of the Assembly districts in New York City. In the district formerly known as the Sixteenth Assembly and now substantially embraced in the Sixth Assembly, the Socialist Labor Party polled, for the Assembly in 1899, 2,141 votes; last year, that is, seven years later and since the split, the combined votes of the two parties was only 471 strong. In other words, there was a heavy relative loss, and an absolute loss amounting to 1,670 votes.

Looking over the rest of the country, substantially the same results are obtained, wherever such comparisons are feasible. The vote in Colorado, where Wm. D. Haywood, now imprisoned in Idaho, was placed at the head of the Socialist party ticket last year, and imparted to the ticket a fictitious value, only accentuates the rule by the seeming exception. The conflict of the two parties has acted unfavorable upon their total poll. The Socialist Party, which ran up, two years ago, to about 400,000 has since then steadily receded more or less markedly everywhere; about the same experience being that of the Socialist Labor Party with its 34,172 poll of 1904.

Such facts and figures would seem to furnish ocular proof of the belief that the existing political conflict is but a wasteful, if not a barren, consumer of Socialist energy. For all that the belief is erroneous. Out of this very conflict the foundation is rising for a mighty Socialist Movement—economic as well as political. While personal animosities may be developed and seem to play a leading role, they are not a cause. The cause is a conflict of two opposing principles. For the ascertaining of the correct one all sacrifice of vote and of effort we hold is well spent.

The two great principles that lie at the bottom of the struggle within the Socialist and Labor Movement in America are these:

One is that the political movement of Socialism can not if it would, and should not, if it could, ignore the economic; and that no healthy or successful political movement of Socialism is possible in this utterly capitalist nation, unless it is founded, banked and based upon a healthy economic or union movement. This principle, in short, holds that in America a bona fide political movement of Socialism can only be the reflex of an equally bona fide, that is, revolutionary economic movement.

The other principle is that the political movement of So-

cialism should not, if it could, and could not if it would, have anything to do with the economic movement. It preaches "Neutrality." towards the Unions, and considers Unionism a transitory manifestation.

All the dissensions, occasionally even bloody, in the Socialist and Labor Movement in America, are traceable to the clash of these two conflicting principles. The Socialist Labor Party —fathoming the profundity of the Marxian thought that "only the Trades Union can give birth to a true political party of Labor," and recognizing, as a consequence, the economic organization as the embryo of future society, therefore, the Might behind the Right proclaimed by the ballot—holds to the former principle. As a consequence the endeavor of this Party has been unflagging for the foundation of bona fide Unionism in the land.

The Trades Union field in America, was found by the political movement of Socialism to be pre-empted by what is called craft or pure and simple Unionism. This system of Unionism organizes the crafts, not simply as units, but as autonomous and sovereign bodies. The fundamental error of this system of economic organization was soon found to be desirable by the capitalist class. The craft union rendered all economic movement fruitless. If, indeed, the wages in these Unions were ever found higher than among the unorganized, the price that the Union paid for such higher wages was to divide the working class hopelessly. In the first place, the craft Union deliberately excluded the majority of the members of the trade from participation through apprenticeship regulations, high dues, high initiation fees and other devices. In the second place, each of these craft Unions, in turn, could earn its Judas pence only by allying itself with the employer each time that some other craft was at war with the employing class. It is superfluous to enumerate the long catalogue of deliberate acts of treason to the working class at home and abroad, and the shocking corruption that such style of "Unionism" was

bound to breed. Suffice it to say, as proof, that these craft Unions are found amalgamated with an organization of capitalists, known as the "Civic Federation," the purpose of which is to establish "harmonious relations between Labor and Capital." These craft Unions are mainly organized in the American Federation of Labor.

A political movement of Labor—and what else is a political party of Socialism but a political movement of Labor?—can recruit its main forces only from the camp of the working class. It is an inevitable consequence that the feuds bred by craft or pure and simple Unionism, in the Labor Movement had to be transferred to the political movement. Under such circumstances not only was the working class split politically among the several political parties of capitalism, but its divisions were finally reflected into two hostile parties of Socialism—one, the Socialist Labor Party, though recognizing the different spheres of the political and the economic wings of the movement, yet closely and avowedly linked with the economic; the other, the Socialist party, proclaiming "Neutrality" in Unionism, as a consequence of the theory regarding the transitoriness of the Union.

The feature of the course of events, or what may be called the fruit of this conflict, in the Socialist and the Labor field of America since the Amsterdam Congress lies in two pregnant happenings.

The first was the springing up in 1905 of the "Industrial Workers of the World," a revolutionary economic organization that planted itself upon the class struggle, and, having taken that advanced point, until then held only by the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, went further along the evolutionary line, rejects the CRAFT system of organization, and set up the INDUSTRIAL system. This move was a loud proclamation of the permanent mission of Unionism. It laid the foundation for the constituent bodies in the government of the Socialist Republic; it was the first practical preparation in

America for the Revolution that will lead society out of the economic storm of Capitalism into the haven of the Co-operative Commonwealth.

The second happening was the meeting of the New Jersey Unity Conference, held in the State of New Jersey by an equal number of representatives of the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party of that State, during the months of December, 1905, January, February and March, 1906. The resolution of the Amsterdam Congress, calling upon the rival political parties, in whatever country such were found, to unite and present one party of Socialism against the parties of capitalism, contributed its share to this event. But the current in that direction had begun to set in before then. It is foreshadowed, if not indicated, by the passages in the Amsterdam report of the Socialist Labor Party, reproduced herein in full, containing literal quotations from Labor publications that had thitherto fraternized with the Socialist party. The theory of "Neutrality" in Unionism had exhibited itself in practice as an error doomed to land into the perversest of "Partisanship" in Unionism. During the preceding six years—from the time that it was raised to a tenet of political Socialism as against the tenet held by the Socialist Labor Party—"Neutrality" had approved itself in practice, as it never could otherwise have approved itself, a mask for reactionary Unionism, and a badge for that mischievous politicianism that is mainly responsible for the so-called Anarchists, who, in fact, are advocates of physical force only. Indignant at the misconduct of the politicianism that attends whatever Socialism is not planted on the economic organization of Labor, men blinded with anger wash out the bath with the baby—reject political agitation itself while rejecting its abuse. The shattering of the theory of "Neutrality" opened the perspective for the full appreciation of the historic mission of Unionism, accordingly it led straight to the shattering also of the companion piece of "Neutrality"—the theory regarding the "transi-

toriness of Unionism." Before the Unity resolution of Amsterdam, even before the assembling of the Chicago Convention, which reared the Industrial Workers of the World, some of the most valuable elements in the Socialist party had begun to draw nearer to the Socialist Labor Party. The Amsterdam Unity resolution, closely followed by the organization of the Industrial Workers of the World, broke the ice. The immediate result was an invitation, issued by the 1905 annual convention of the Socialist party of New Jersey to the Socialist Labor Party of the same State to consider the basis for political unity in America. The deliberations of the New Jersey Unity Conference, which have been issued in book form by the Conference, are a landmark in the American movement. The manifesto issued by the Conference to their New Jersey constituents with virtual unanimity—it received the vote of all the twelve Socialist Labor Party delegates, and of all the Socialist party delegates, except one—, contains the following passage:

"The Conference holds . . . that without the political movement is backed by a class-conscious, that is, a properly constructed economic organization, ready to take and hold and conduct the productive powers of the land, and thereby ready and able to enforce, if need be, and when need be, the fiat of the Socialist ballot of the working class—that without such a body in existence, the Socialist political movement will be but a flash in the pan, successful at best, in affording political preferment to scheming intellectuals, and thereby powerful only to attract such elements. On this specific head the Conference moreover holds, that a political party of Socialism which marches to the polls unarmed by such a properly constructed economic organization, but invites a catastrophe over the land in the measure that it strains for political success, and in the measure that it achieves it. It must be an obvious fact to all serious observers of the times, that the day of the political success of such a party in America, would be the day

No matter how vigorously dual union (W.I.W.) may cry organize, it keeps workers dis-organized

of its defeat, immediately followed by an industrial and financial crisis, from which none would suffer more than the working class itself.

"The Conference holds that for the Socialist political movement to favor A. F. of L. craft Unionism is to bluntly deny Socialist principles and aims, for no matter how vigorously the A. F. of L. may cry 'Organize! Organize!' in practice it seeks to keep the unorganized, the overwhelming majority of the working class, out of the organization. The facts can easily be proved to a candid world. High initiation fees, limitation of apprentices, cornering the jobs for the few whom they admit into the organization, are but a few of the methods used to discourage organization, which results, not only in lack of organization, but by the craft form of what organization they do have, they isolate the workers into groups, which left to fight for themselves in time of conflict, become the easy prey of the capitalists. On the other hand, the readiness with which certain portions of the exploiting class force their victims to join the A. F. of L. is sufficient condemnation of the organization.

"By its own declarations and acts, the A. F. of L. shows that it accepts wage slavery as a finality; and, holding that there is identity of interest between employer and employe, the A. F. of L. follows it out by gladly accepting the vice-presidency of the Belmont Civic Federation for its president, Gompers, thus allying itself with an organization fathered by the capitalist class for the purpose of blurring the class struggle, and for prolonging the present system which is centered on the exploitation of labor.

"For these reasons the Conference concludes that it is the duty of a political party of Socialism to promote the organization of a properly constructed Union, both by elucidating the virtues of such a Union, and by exposing the vices of craft Unionism. Consequently, and as a closing conclusion on this head, it rejects as impracticable, vicious, and productive only

of corruption, the theory of neutrality on the economic field. The Conference, true to these views condemns the A. F. of L. as an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class.

"Holding that the political power flows from and is a result of economic power, and that the capitalist is entrenched in the Government as the result of his industrial power, the Conference commends as useful to the emancipation of the working class, the Industrial Workers of the World, which, instead of running away from the class struggle, bases itself squarely upon it, and boldly and correctly sets out the Socialist principle that the working class and the employing class have nothing in common, and that 'the working class must come together on the political as well as on the industrial field, to take and hold that which they produce by their labor.' "

Submitted by the representatives of the two parties to a referendum vote of their respective New Jersey constituencies, the manifesto was unanimously approved by the New Jersey membership of the Socialist Labor Party, but was rejected by a majority of the Socialist party membership of the State. The matter, however, did not end there; nor could it. The work done by the New Jersey Conference has since slowly percolated beyond the boundaries of New Jersey and reached large numbers of the members of the Socialist party in other States. The result has been a variety of propositions, the most pointed of which is that which came last September from the New Orleans, La., local of the Socialist party. The New Orleans proposition calls upon the National Executive of the Socialist party to submit to a referendum of the national membership the question of inviting the Socialist Labor Party to elect a national committee for the purpose of conferring with a similar national committee of the Socialist party looking to the national unity of the two parties. The New Orleans proposed resolution has received considerable support from the Socialist party organizations in other cities, and may

possibly reach in the course of the year the stage of submission to a general vote of that party. In the meantime, however, many of the best members and groups of members in the Socialist party, too impatient to await the slow process of the referendum, and considering their party hopelessly wedded to the A. F. of L., are daily withdrawing from the Socialist party, joining the Socialist Labor Party and issuing printed statements of their reasons for so doing. This has happened notedly in Minnesota, Ohio and the State of Washington, besides a large number of cities throughout the land.

While, however slowly, this development is steadily and soundly proceeding within the militant field, outside of that field American capitalism is doing its work to perfection. It is creating the conditions that breed the atmosphere which ripens the revolutionary fruit. What those conditions and that atmosphere are may be gathered from two utterances—both taken hot from the capitalist oven. Addressing a banquet of capitalists last December, Leslie M. Shaw, at the time the Secretary of the Treasury in President Roosevelt's cabinet, said: "Fall upon your knees and pray to God to save us from our prosperity." About a month later, on last December 28, the New York "Sun," an alert organ of the capitalist class ever ready to recommend the most ferocious atrocities against workingmen on strike, struck this note of warning: "We have had such years of prosperity and progress as were never known in the history of the nation," and yet "there is a greater unrest and a greater uneasiness in the air than there was before Sumter was fired on"—the firing on Sumter ushered in the Civil War.

Il est un âge dans la vie
Ou chaque rêve doit finir.
Un âge ou l'âme recueillie
A besoin de se souvenir.

The dream that our people have so long been fondled in,

concerning the delightfulness and the stability of capitalist institutions in America, is fast evaporating; the dream concerning the efficacy of pure and simple Unionism, that is, of a Unionism grounded on "fraternal relations between Capital and Labor," together with the companion dream of pure and simple political Socialism, that is, the Socialism that marches to the ballot box unequipped with the Might of the Industrial organization of the Working Class,—this double dream also is lifting from the public mind. Coupled to this come the recollections of bitter and hitherto not understood experiences crowding upon the mind. For these combined reasons the Socialist Labor Party considers of supreme importance the strictest present adherence to the sociologic chart outlined by the combined philosophy of Marx and Morgan. Hence, also the attitude of the Socialist Labor Party towards the Paris, or Kautsky resolution of 1900. In view of the fact that the resolution, offered upon this head by Daniel De Leon, the delegate of the Socialist Labor Party at the Amsterdam Congress, also happens to have been left out of the official records of the Congress, and as a means of further elucidating the position taken by the Socialist Labor Party, both at home and towards the International Movement, the said Socialist Labor Party resolution, is here produced in full:

"Whereas, The struggle between the working class and the capitalist class is a continuous and irrepressible conflict, a conflict that tends every day rather to be intensified than to be softened;

"Whereas, The existing governments are committees of the ruling class, intended to safeguard the yoke of capitalist exploitation upon the neck of the working class;

"Whereas, At the last International Congress, held in Paris in1900, a resolution, generally known as the Kautsky resolution, was adopted, the closing clauses of which contemplate the emergency of the working class accepting office at the hands of such capitalist governments, and also, especially,

presupposes THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPARTIALITY ON THE PART OF THE RULING CLASS GOVERNMENTS IN THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE WORKING CLASS AND THE CAPITALIST CLASS; and

"Whereas, The said clauses—applicable perhaps, in countries not yet wholly freed from feudal institutions—were adopted under conditions both in France and in the Paris Congress itself, that justify erroneous conclusions on the nature of the class struggle, the character of capitalist governments and the tactics that are imperative upon the proletariat in the pursuit of its campaign to overthrow the capitalist system in countries, which like the United States of America, have wholly wiped out feudal institutions; therefore, be it

"Resolved, First, That the said Kautsky resolution be and the same is hereby repealed as a principle of general Socialist tactics;

"Second, That in fully developed capitalist countries like America, the working class can not, without betrayal of the cause of the proletariat, fill any political office other than such as they conquer for and by themselves."

Such—as above roughly outlined—is the lay of the land in general, and in particular, here in America. Different diagnoses may be and still are made from different quarters, resulting in different methods. The methods dictated by diagnoses different from the diagnosis of the Socialist Labor Party have each in turn, however promiseful at the start, shrivelled and proved ineffective. Ever ready to overhaul and re-examine its tenets, and ever overhauling and re-examining them, the Socialist Labor Party pursues its undeterred career with an eye single upon the goal—the emancipation of the proletariat. While it thus labors—

The dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves
May see us in sunshine or shade;
Yet true to our course, though our shadow grow dark
We'll trim our broad sail as before,
And stand by the rudder that governs the bark,
Nor ask how we look from the shore!

Representative of the Socialist Labor Party of America on the International Socialist Bureau.

DANIEL DE LEON.

New York, January, 1907.

By order of the National Committee of the Socialist Labor Party.

FRANK BOHN,
Nat'l Sec'y.

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